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ABSTRACT

As a result of an open admissions policy, the City University of New York (CUNY) was faced with large numbers of students in need of instruction in the basic skills. Each college had to develop testing programs to determine placement and to diagnose individual students needs, and each was faced with the necessity of creating larger programs in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a second language. To improve communication among the faculty involved in these programs, an instructional resource center was created to organize, expand, and coordinate the various remedial efforts within the University. More recently, its functions have been expanded through the Freshman Skills Assessment Program (FSAP). This program insures that students in need of basic skills instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics are identified prior to entry and are placed in courses appropriate to their skill levels. Students must pass tests in all three subjects in order to enter upper division classes. Educators at CUNY are currently conducting a study that will enable them to look at the differences in the structure and content of programs across campuses and how these relate to FSAP retest scores, performance in regular college courses, persistence within the college, and retention in the university. (HOD)

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THE BASIC SKILLS EFFORT AT THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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I. Historical Perspective

The necessity for institutions of higher education to teach and evaluate basic skills is the result of many forces in American society: social, economic, political, and educational. We know that education itself is not confined to the classroom but takes place in the context of family, neighborhood, peers, the work-place, and the surrounding world of communications. Therefore, as we speak of the failure of education in America, we refer not only to the classroom but also to outside educational influences. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the quality of formal education in American society has deteriorated. There is evidence of a decrease in literacy and a corresponding increase in concern about illiteracy in America at all socio-economic levels (see Appendix A). In discussing the decrease in the general level of basic skills, a recent report of the Commission on the Humanities declares that of seven priorities, "the highest priority is to improve the quality of education in our elementary and secondary schools."

It is not surprising, then, that freshmen who enter the City University of New York (CUNY) are deficient in at least one of the basic skills. More than half the students who entered the senior colleges as regular freshmen in Fall 1979 took at least one remedial course in their first semester. This is true even of those students who came to the University with high school averages above 80.0 (see Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix B).

These freshmen enter an institution with a past of its own. The colleges which later became part of the City University of New York were created to educate the poor, the disenfranchised, those aspiring to better lives than they and their families had known. In 1847, Townsend Harris founded the Free Academy, later the City College, with these words, "Open the doors to all -- let the rich and the poor take their seats together and know no distinction save that of industry, good conduct, and intellect." The City College, and later its sister public institutions, theoretically provided open access to students, but in practice admissions were made through competitive grades. In 1920, a high school graduate with a 72 average could have gotten into the City College. However, by the late 1960's, students needed an average of over 82 to get into one of the senior colleges; often, three-quarters of an entering class had high school averages close to 90. To be eligible for admission, students had to have an academic rather than a commercial or vocational high school diploma. This automatic exclusion of all but those who possessed the academic diploma excluded many students --in particular, many minority students.

In an attempt to increase the number of such students, the City University instituted the College Discovery Program in 1964 and the Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK)

Program in 1966. Nevertheless, racial inequities persisted, and the enrollment of minorities in CUNY still in no way reflected the enrollment of minorities in the New York City high schools. A further attempt to increase the number of minority students was made by the adoption of the Open Admissions Policy in 1970. This policy resulted in an unprecedented institutional growth spurt; CUNY grew from approximately 163,000 students in 1969 to over a quarter of a million in 1975, an increase of over 50%. The subsequent modification of the Open Admissions policy, the imposition of tuition, and the beginning of New York City's fiscal crisis in 1976 resulted in an institution whose current size more closely resembles the 1969 level, with approximately 172,000 students enrolled for degree credit in Fall 1980. The growth and contraction in the size of the student body was marked by a corresponding growth and subsequent contraction in the size of the faculty. Concurrently, the needs of many of the students entering the University were changing.

II. Meeting a New Challenge

In the early years of Open Admissions, the colleges were faced with large numbers of students in need of instruction in the basic skills. Drawing on their previous experience with the SEEK and College Discovery programs, each college was faced with the necessity of creating larger programs in reading,

writing, mathematics and, generally, English as a second language (ESL). Each college had to develop testing programs to determine placement and to diagnose individual student needs. That all these programs were developed individually resulted in great diversity in the nature and scope of basic skills programs, in the kinds of tests used to determine placement into these programs, and in ascertaining levels of proficiency of students who completed the programs.

The Central Office attempted to bring together and encourage communication among the faculty and administrators at the campuses involved in the basic skills effort. Between 1970 and 1974, it sponsored yearly conferences on basic skills instruction which led to the publication of proceedings disseminated to the campuses. Of even greater significance, the conferences helped lead to the establishment of a variety of University-wide faculty groups interested in the teaching of basic skills: the CUNY Association of Writing Supervisors (CAWS), the CUNY Mathematics Discussion Group, the CUNY Reading Council, and the CUNY English as a Second Language (ESL) Council. These faculty groups still function as significant forces in the basic skills effort.

To improve communication among faculty involved in these programs, the Instructional Resource Center (IRC), in the Office of Academic Affairs, was created by the Board of Higher

Education in 1974 to "facilitate, organize, expand and coordinate the various remedial efforts within the University." The IRC gathers, organizes, and disseminates material on basic skills; aids in the development of basic skills faculty through sponsored research; acts as liaison with the basic skills faculty groups; and serves as consultant to teachers and administrators within CUNY and throughout the country. More recently, its functions have been expanded through the Freshman Skills Assessment Program.

III. The Freshman Skills Assessment Program

On April 5, 1976, the Board of Higher Education passed a series of regulations dealing with academic standards within the University. Among these was the following resolution:

> That students moving to the upper divisions of a four year college either from the lower divisions of the college or from a community college within the University system or outside of it must provide evidence, in accordance with a standard to be determined by the Chancellor, that they have attained a level of proficiency in basic learning skills necessary to cope successfully with advanced work in the academic disciplines.

The resolution led to the establishment of the Freshman Skills Assessment Program (FSAP), in effect for all incoming freshmen since the Fall 1978 semester. In addition to fulfilling the initial Board mandate, the testing program insures that

students in need of basic skills instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics are identified prior to entry and are placed in courses appropriate to their levels of skills. They are retested upon completion of the courses. Students must pass all three tests in order to enter the upper divisions of CUNY.

The FSAP tests in reading, writing, and mathematics were created or chosen by three Task Forces composed of a total of thirty-five faculty members appointed by the Chancellor. Each Task Force consisted of faculty members teaching basic skills courses as well as experts in tests and measurement. The three Task Forces reported recommendations to a Policy Advisory Board, consisting of faculty and college administrators. The Reading Task Force selected a commercially developed standardized multiple-choice test of reading comprehension. The Mathematics Task Force constructed its own test measuring basic arithmetic and algebraic skills. The Writing Task Force decided that the test should consist of a writing sample to be graded holistically, and it developed a test format, rating scale, and method of training readers. The three Task Forces also recommended levels of performance in each area that would constitute the standard for minimal competency.

The overall impact of the Freshman Skills Assessment Program has been a movement toward agreement on standards of minimal

competency in reading, writing, and mathematics in the seventeen undergraduate colleges in the City University. While colleges are free to set higher standards for competency, for the first time CUNY has a generally agreed-upon "floor" for these standards. This has improved the communication of standards among colleges and, particularly, has improved articulation between the community and senior colleges. This communication is vital, given the extent of basic skills instruction in the University, especially among freshmen and students in the lower divisions. Table 3 in Appendix B shows the percentage of student credit load devoted to non-degree credit remedial work during the Fall 1979 semester.

IV. An Example of Trends in One Basic Skills Area

Because of this improved communication, some overall trends are observable; this may be seen by looking at one of the skills areas--basic writing. On the average, two-thirds of the entering freshmen at the senior colleges and between 80% and 90% of the students at the community colleges require one or more basic writing courses. At each campus there are at least two levels of such courses geared to students who do not meet the minimal standard on the CUNY Writing Assessment Test. In general, from 0 to 2 degree credits are awarded for satisfactory completion of the lowest-level writing courses, which generally meet from 3 to 6 hours a week. Generally, more credit is awarded for

completion of the second-level writing course than for the first-level course.

Student support services such as writing laboratories and drop-in tutoring centers have been reduced because of budget cutbacks on almost all the campuses. At the same time, peer tutoring programs are increasing at CUNY as they are nationally. Some programs are tied to credit-bearing courses which train skilled and empathetic upper-level students as tutors. Advocates of peer tutoring consider it cost-effective and instructionally sound, for often students learn best from one another. Moreover, in such programs, both tutors and those tutored benefit. One member of the English Department at Brooklyn College regularly offers a summer program through the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to train teachers throughout the country in the use of peer tutoring.

Curricula in basic writing courses vary from campus to campus. Last year the FSAP Writing Task Force developed a three-semester model curriculum which was circulated for discussion throughout the University's English and basic skills departments. This resulted in campus discussions about the relationship between courses in the writing sequences at the various colleges and the skills that should be taught and reinforced in each course. In addition, the Writing Task Force appointed a committee of English-as-a-second-language specialists to develop a model

ESL curriculum, which is now being circulated throughout the University for discussion.

If little writing is demanded of students in their academic courses, students who have done little writing before their arrival at CUNY will never become competent writers; therefore, consistent with a growing national trend in writing instruction, faculty at some colleges have developed "Writing Across the Curriculum" programs to encourage faculty from other academic areas to integrate the teaching of writing into their courses. This is important because skills which students acquire later in life with great labor may easily be lost if the skills are not utilized and reinforced. Efforts to generate faculty support for such programs have been made at LaGuardia Community College through the Integrated Skills Reinforcement Program, at Hunter College through the Teaching Writing in the Subject Areas Program, and at Lehman College through the Writing in the Academic Disciplines Program.

Although passing the FSAP tests cannot be mandated by the Central Office as part of the exit criteria from skills courses, thirteen of the seventeen colleges have chosen to make the Writing Assessment Test part of the exit criteria from their basic writing sequences. The test has helped to clarify the

level of proficiency required to enter the regular freshman composition courses throughout CUNY, and many writing faculty agree that it has helped teachers establish with each other and with their students a common vocabulary about writing competency.

V. Articulation of Basic Skills Programs

CUNY basic skills faculty have not only shared concerns and information with each other but have begun to articulate with their counterparts in the New York City high schools through participation in national and regional conferences as well as joint programs. One example of this collaborative effort is the New York City Writing Project (NYCWP), based at Lehman College and one of seventy-three affiliates of Berkeley's Bay Area Writing Project. The project is designed to train teachers to write extensively, to demonstrate successful approaches to the teaching of writing, and to help teachers to adapt these skills to meet the needs of students at various grade levels. Another example is the Queens English Project, supported by a Federal grant, which attempts to articulate a combined curriculum in reading and writing beginning in the junior year of high school and extending through the freshman year of college. Five high schools participate with Queens College in this program. In some of the high

schools, Queens College students work as tutors alongside of teachers in the classrooms. In addition, New York City's Board of Education utilizes CUNY experts in basic skills as consultants and workshop leaders in their efforts in faculty development. The highly successful WEDGE Program (Writing Each Day Generates Excellence), cited recently in The New York Times as a model program, has made extensive use of CUNY faculty in teacher training and development of instructional materials.

The teaching of basic skills at the college level is becoming recognized as an academic discipline in its own right, evidenced by the growth in the last decade of conferences and publications devoted to research in teaching basic skills to college students. The Instructional Resource Center (IRC), in the Office of Academic Affairs, has served as a major disseminator of information to those interested in teaching basic skills. The IRC presently consists of a staff of two part-time basic skills curriculum specialists and two part-time student clerical assistants. Despite its small yearly operating budget, the IRC functions primarily through the involvement of numerous CUNY basic skills teaching faculty who contribute to its various publications. The IRC is also able to support the individual research projects of a small number of basic skills faculty by granting a one-course remission for a semester.

Resource, the newsletter of the IRC, is published quarterly and serves as a major vehicle for information exchange for 6,000 faculty and administrators both within and outside of CUNY. Approximately 40% of the recipients of Resource are not affiliated with CUNY and are located in forty-one states and abroad. Occasionally, special issues deal with single subjects such as the Proceedings of the Fourth Annual CUNY Association of Writing Supervisors (CAWS) Conference; the forthcoming Spring 1981 issue will be devoted to the teaching of English as a second language. The Journal of Basic Writing is published jointly with City College. Each issue focuses on single topics such as the evaluation of writing, the uses of grammar in teaching writing, and the structures of effective writing programs. The IRC also aids in the production of the yearly Journal of the CUNY Mathematics Discussion Group. The CUNY Bibliography of Basic Skills, published in 1980, cites over 600 works written by CUNY faculty in the basic skills areas over the last ten years, indicating the contributions made by CUNY faculty to major national skills publications.

This Spring, the IRC will sponsor the first national conference devoted solely to the teaching of remedial and developmental mathematics on the college level. Program proposals have been received from almost two hundred mathematicians from colleges

and universities throughout the country. Networks, an in-service training and basic skills dissemination organization based at Bronx Community College, and faculty from a number of CUNY colleges are involved in the planning effort.

VI. Evaluating Program Effectiveness

Mandating minimal competency testing programs and developing programs and structures which professionals believe will allow students to develop these competencies are far easier than evaluating the effectiveness of such programs. This problem plagues CUNY's remedial efforts as it plagues similar efforts in school systems throughout the country.

There are those who question whether teaching basic skills in college can be effective after students have spent twelve or more years in school systems where they have not acquired these skills. Even if students acquire these skills in college, some people question whether basic skills alone are sufficient to insure success in college. Those of us who believe that teaching basic skills in college can be successful demand to know how this success can be achieved in the quickest and most cost-effective manner.

But first we must define "success." Is it to be measured

by test score gains achieved by students who have been subjected to basic skills instruction for a period of time? Is it to be measured by the grades these students achieve in subject area courses after they have finished their basic skills courses? Is it to be measured by persistence in college for a given number of semesters or by the completion of the degree? Many argue that even for those who might be labeled "failures" by these traditional measures, the time spent in college has had a value-added effect on their lives: they may be more interested and more able to be helpful in their children's education, and their children may be more likely to complete college; they may have gained skills that will make them more employable and at a higher level of employment; their lives may have been enriched through exposure to new areas and ideas. However, this value-added hypothesis is a difficult one to measure.

Even if we choose to look only at the more traditional measures of success, it may be argued that success in college does not depend solely on the quality of the basic skills programs in which the students are enrolled. The attitudes of faculty, administrators, and other students; the courses under-prepared students take outside of basic skills programs and the sequence in which they take these courses; the counseling, tutoring, and other support services they get or do not get; and the entire climate of the college are all factors which

affect a student's success.

However, basic skills courses play a pivotal role in beginning to equip students with the skills, work habits, attitudes, and strengths needed to cope in an academic environment. Therefore, we have a continuing responsibility to identify those basic skills programs which seem to work better than others. Classrooms as laboratories are notoriously sloppy places in which to do adequately controlled research. Nevertheless, classrooms are where we are and where we must begin, although we do well to remember H.L. Mencken's caution that "for every human problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat and wrong."

Throughout the brief history of basic skills instruction at the college level, not only within CUNY but nationwide, there has been very little research on program effectiveness that employs the controls necessary to attribute the ultimate success of students to the effects of those programs. Such attempts at program evaluation at CUNY have traditionally been conducted at the campus level rather than centrally. This was the only approach to evaluation possible because, before the advent of FSAP, there was tremendous diversity within the system in the types of instruments used to determine placement, the nature and scope of the remedial sequences, and the standards a student

would have to meet in order to exit from the particular sequence and move on to college-level work. A review of this campus-based research, conducted by CUNY's Office of Institutional Research in 1978, documents local efforts at program evaluation since 1970 and highlights some of the difficulties encountered when evaluation research in this area is attempted.

Several research studies are presently being conducted at the University level in an attempt to measure the effects of basic skills instruction and to isolate those aspects of the programs that most contribute to their success. We are in a better position to do this research than we were in the past because of the common metric provided by FSAP. The Office of Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, is in the process of conducting a follow-up study of the entire Fall 1978 CUNY entering freshman class, the first cohort subject to the FSAP guidelines. Incorporating both information on student background characteristics and information gathered through the IRC's campus surveys of programs in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a second language, this study will enable us to look at the differences in the structure and content of programs across campuses and how these relate to FSAP retest scores, performance in regular college courses, persistence within the college, and retention in the University. Research on the effects of basic skills instruction on such a

large scale has never been done before and its results will have national significance.

VII. Directions for the Future

We recognize that at the City University there are critical problems far from solved. Here, as well as throughout the nation, attrition is a major problem. Of the thirty-three thousand students who entered the University as first-time freshmen in the fall of 1978, slightly over half re-enrolled four semesters later; the problem of attrition was especially acute among the least prepared students who entered. Although we are aware that many outside factors beyond our control contribute to a student's decision to leave the University, we recognize and accept responsibility for those factors which we can control -- programs, instruction, and support services.

We must continue to develop effective basic skills programs at the City University, to encourage and support faculty who work directly with underprepared students and who contribute to research in basic skills instruction, to provide adequate support services, and to conduct innovative and systematic research aimed at measuring the success of our instructional efforts. At a time of decreasing financial resources, we must continue to assess our institutional priorities and learn how to do the best

we can as quickly as we can so that our students will move beyond mastery of the basic skills to critical judgment, understanding, and appreciation of the complex world in which they live and which they will one day shape.

APPENDIX A

THE CHRONICLE

of Higher Education

Scholars Increasingly Concerned About 'Deterioration of Literacy'

psychiatry and psychology and a great deal of the language educators use. The peculiar thing about these languag involve the 'euphemizatio thing—to use a barbarous u

"Everything has to be re not a teacher; you are coordinator. People are ing literacy to communi mation. They are pers kind of parascientific la

president of Bard College, where the conference was held.

"Every college freshman should get ... weeks of basic training in English, ... with no other options," he ... hould be intense

"The proble television. It to which lar these happ by televisio

Operation Illiteracy

By Jonathan Kozol

BOSTON — Twenty percent of adult men and women in this nation cannot read enough to understand a want-ad or write enough to fill in a job application. The term for this condition, which is crippling to any dream of leading a productive or rewarding life, ... "functional illiteracy."

... is higher for blacks (44 ... for those of

The Decline in Literacy Is No Illusion

People who read and write every day are likely to brood over any sign that American schools don't teach reading and writing as well as they used to. We ... interested party. Naturally, we are also p... that high school students in the old d... capable than today's. Yet there ... dence that our hunch is ri... any bias of occupatio...

Consider ... men at ...

who volunteered to take that same test — in a ... ganized by its original author, Dr. Alvin Eur... supported partly by The New York Times Fou... — got decidedly poorer grades. Even the best o... were less literate than the best of 1928 and ther... many fewer high scorers in this generation.

More high school graduates head for college ... lays than 50 years ago, and there are presumably ... ficient students among them. But as our colle... d Hechinger noted in reporting the results, ... ot explain the poorer showing of even the b... ts of 1976. The evidence of decline, long noted ... entrance exams, is becoming very strong. ... educators say the evidence has been t... , or is a statistical artifact, or is a function ... rsal education — or that literacy is just le... But a more significant decline than such ... t is certainly real. The lamen...

THE QUIET REVOLUTION AGAINST ILLITERACY

By Regina Weinreich

As I walked to my classroom eage... deliver the lesson on subject verb agree... ment to my new freshmen I wondered if ... they would get it today? But when I en... tered the windowless room, I found com... plete darkness. Giggles told me the writing ... class sat before me as usual, only today ... someone had turned out the lights. ... There'd been some minor scuffles in the ... past weeks of the new term, some time ... wasting digressions on why we have to ... write so much, some disdain at bluejeans ... as the hip garb of the college teacher in ... preference for the business look. But I had ... come to recognize this hostility as a mean... ure of their frustration.

It was fall of '73 and these were the first ... freshmen enrolled in Brooklyn College's ... Pilot Projects, a newly created program for ... open-enrollment students to integrate ... reading and writing with subject courses. ... The hope was that eventually these stu... dents would develop enough competence ... to handle general college work. Although ... no one liked to talk about it, they were ... semiliterate and it would take repeated ... semesters of reading and writing to get ... them to the freshman level. Their ap... to learning had been reenacted ... school years, graded by ... and lazy ... They ... predominant technique ... Center, was linked to ... students could learn to ... threatening, informa... simple collaboration ... themselves. The cente... target within the dep... was considered some... start because he ... ideas, the isolation ... writing as a solitar... table paper, letter...

My own first ... Writing Center ... about the exper... who coul...

The End of a Dream: Illiteracy Invades The Middle Class

By SUSAN JACOBY

AS the evening began, I was suffused with an uncharacteristic sense of confidence that civilization, as civilized men and women understand the term, is flourishing in spite of (and, in part, because of) the disorienting cultural changes of the last 15 years. I had gone to visit an old high school friend on the day after Thanksgiving; she and her husband ... and images. This is a very ... pleasure; watching that little ... was imagining an adult who m... day value the things I hold d... paraphrase Adrienne Rich's tit... dreaming of a common langua...

•

Then, as Katie sat on her fath... and listened to a story, Jam... telling me about a class she is t... at Michigan State University. ... dents are mostly ...

The New York Time

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1979

Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores Drop as 10-Year Trend Goes On

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 (AP) — The Scholastic Aptitude Test scores of America's high school seniors fell slightly this year, continuing a downward trend that began a decade ago, the College Board said today.

The average S.A.T. verbal score dropped two points to 427 and the mathematics score dropped one point to 467.

The multiple-choice test [illegible] college-bound senior[illegible] scale of 200 to 800. The [illegible] ago verbal scores were [illegible] 466. Originally 500 was [illegible] average.

Although the test was d[illegible] students, not schools, the s[illegible] in scores has been viewed [illegible] turn as evidence that ranked [illegible] in American education.

Robert G. Cameron, a Co[illegible] official, said that the latest [illegible] "disappointing in light of [illegible] schools have been doing [illegible] education."

But he added, "Since there [illegible] causes for the decline, schools [illegible] expect to reverse the trend quickl[illegible]

Copyright © 1979 The New York Times

The College Board maintains that drills and cramming are not likely to raise students' scores very much because the test measures skills developed over a long time. But a recent Federal Trade Commission study indicat[illegible] coaching schools gain[illegible]

[illegible]ased the [illegible]given to [illegible]pers of [illegible] their [illegible]p, [illegible]ad [illegible] is [illegible]2 [illegible]ce [illegible] a [illegible] a

Two-Thirds Fail Proficiency Test In Mathematics

High School Students Must Pass Exam for Diploma

By MARCIA CHAMBERS

About two-thirds of the public school [illegible] ninth and 10th graders failed the [illegible]atics competency test last June. [illegible] is the first of a series of more [illegible]t examinations students will be [illegible]d to take to qualify for graduation [illegible]ing in 1981.

The figures, which were released this [illegible] by School Chancellor Frank J. Mac[illegible]ola, showed that the results for New [illegible] City's ninth graders were almost [illegible]ctly the reverse of those for ninth [illegible]ders elsewhere in the state.

Two-thirds of the public schools upstate [illegible]ve reported results of the test, and ac[illegible]rding to a preliminary analysis by the [illegible]tate's Education Department, two-[illegible]thirds of their ninth graders passed the [illegible]test. In the 10th grade, upstate young[illegible]sters did almost as poorly as the city [illegible] youngsters, with failures hovering around 60 percent.

The results were an indication of the difficulties that lie ahead for the city in trying to prepare youngsters for graduation from high school.

[illegible]ts Called a Surprise

[illegible]ts revealed

Reading Scores Decline In the City Schools Aga[illegible]

By GENE I. MAEROFF

The gradual annual slippage in reading proficiency in the city's public schools continued last year, with the percentage of pupils reading a year or more below grade level increasing in seven of the eight grades tes[illegible]

per cent, reading a yea[illegible] more below grade level [illegible] any grade tested.

Reading achievement in [illegible] city's 1.1-million-pupil s[illegible] system, the largest in the [illegible] try, has been dropping f[illegible] decade, but the pro[illegible]

Fifth of City Pupils Fou[illegible] 2 Years Behind in Read[illegible]

Tests Show the Majority Are Not U[illegible] Children in Same Grades Elsewhe[illegible] —Schools Cite Aid to Many

By LEONARD BUDER

[illegible] pupils [illegible]ing up to standards ma[illegible] [illegible] who were below grade [illegible] [illegible]t not among the m[illegible] [illegible]retarded. In its a[illegible] [illegible]sterday, the h[illegible] [illegible]d this aspe[illegible] [illegible]ed the gain [illegible]ked improvement."

[illegible] releasing the syst[illegible] [illegible]ults, Dr. Bernard [illegible] [illegible]an, Superintendent of [illegible] expressed concern th[illegible] many of our pupils rea[illegible] grade level." (The list [illegible] on Page 30.)

He pledged that all t[illegible] and supervisors in the [illegible] "will continue to exert [illegible] professional skill at ou[illegible] mand to raise the achie[illegible] of all our pupils."

"It will take time to [illegible] the excellence we seek," h[illegible]

Reading Level Of City's Pupils Shows Decline

By MARCIA CHAMBERS

[illegible] a dip from 1978 levels, 40 percent of [illegible] students in New York City's public [illegible]entary and junior high schools read [illegible]low the national average, accord[illegible] [illegible]spring's annual citywide read[illegible]

[illegible]ment of the scores yester[illegible] [illegible]ancellor Frank J. Mac[illegible] [illegible]some other big cities [illegible]pporting in readi[illegible] New Yo[illegible]

[illegible]ging develop[illegible] [illegible]pupils [illegible]neigh[illegible]e, four [illegible]rs ahead [illegible]ame grade [illegible]Negro and [illegible]s.

Tests Show Drop In Math Ability Of U.S. Students

Sharpest Decline Is Found at the High School Level

By GENE I. MAEROFF

The mathematics achievement of stu[illegible] in the nation's elementary and sec[illegible]dary schools, particularly the ability to [illegible]pply knowledge to problem [illegible]olved in the 1970's, a [illegible]anced study has found.

Furthermore, the test rev[illegible] a sharpest drop occurred [illegible]chool students, the group [illegible]en faltering in reading, [illegible]her subjects.

That finding is borne out [illegible]ry schools, where two-thi[illegible] [illegible] system's ninth and 10th [illegible] June the first of two stri[illegible]atics tests that will be [illegible]aduation by 1981. In th[illegible]

24

Scores on Scholastic Aptitude Tests Continue to Dr[illegible]

By GENE I. MAEROFF

The steady decline in the scores of college-bound high school students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, a phenomenon frequently cited as evidence of deteriorating academic achievement, has continued into its 16th year, according to figures released today by the College Board.

The average verbal score fell two points to 427 and the average mathematics score fell one point to 467. Each score is on a scale of 200 to 800.

The verbal score has declined 54 points since 1963, the mathematics score 32 points. Originally 500 was the average score on either part of the examination, which is administered to almost one million students a year, is 500.

From 1978 to 1980, scores declined one point on the mathematics section and three points on the verbal section, the largest combined drop since 1977.

"The continuation of this trend has [illegible] may not be reversible by changes [illegible] mal education alone."

Decline Frustrates Educators

There has been considerable [illegible] tion about the reasons for the decli[illegible] educators have been frustrated in [illegible] efforts to find a way to end [illegible]

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EASTERN EDITION

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1981

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Remedial Bosses

Employers Take Over Where Schools Failed To Teach the Basics

Courses in English and Math Offered to Help Workers Master Their Equipment

Fractions, Rulers and Robots

By CAROL HYMOWITZ
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Well after I graduate from school I had plans to find me a job at a bank as a clerk. I with and around people and ... people and see different ... love to have a job at ... working at a bank ... and the more impor... The personnel ... Bank & Trust C... job applicat... school grade ... secretarial ... ality or ... CCBC ...

What Young People Need Before Jobs

Studies Dispute View That Schools Cannot Overcome Effect of Poverty

By EDWARD B. FISKE

New studies of inner city public schools are challenging the widespread view — ... in the 1966 Coleman report and ... known social science research ... schools can do little to over... effects of poverty.

... suggests that if ... poverty run, ... for instruction in the public schools and a ... Harvard researcher. "But schools can no longer use students' disadvantaged background as an excuse for not teaching them the fundamentals."

The research has found that there are specific characteristics of successful schools — such as the right kind of leadership and testing practices — and some school systems, including New York City's, have begun systematic efforts to ... these characteristics in low... schools.

... theory is growing in its ... universities hold and ... scholars quo... ...ities are of... ...ic'

Competency Exams Test Schools as Well as Pupils

By GENE I. MAEROFF

What costs $27 billion a year, provides jobs for more than two million people, keeps 45 million young people off the streets and is the object of unending criticism?

a) The automobile industry.
b) The defense budget.
c) The nation's public schools.

If you answered the above question about the nation's public schools correctly, you may understand why the minimum competency movement and the ... public schools currently are attracting so much support. Disenchantment with declining ... test scores, it has spurred here and there ... and other ... ...ing to assure pu... ...are getting their ...

... and New Jersey have joined 34 other ... in adopting education requirements that will ...

... planned to during the next several years. Although ... Connecticut has not imposed ... ...ts, ...ion or graduation, it has created tests to spot ... ...ficulty through the teachers to ... ...ntion.

... New York — Beginning in 1981, students of the ... Community Term in ... ...ublic ... ...ill be required to ... ...ing ... ...ing ... ...ing

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City U. Will Require 3-R College Tests

By EDWARD B. FISKE

The City University disclosed ... that it would begin testing students ... fail to make sure that they ... minimum standards in the ... reading, mathematics ... Students who fail ... will be barr... tions from community ... from ... if they are ... college. From ... upper-clas... The ... follow...

Regents May Remove Schools' Certification If Over 15% Fail Test

ALBANY, Sept. 20 (AP) — In a 13-to-3 vote, the New York State Board of Regents set new ... standards for high schools ... today that wou... heard to with... drew the acc... which lets th... bers of the ... competency ... mathemat... "I don't ... this state ... standard ... job," sai... tan, a m... But ... the Re... state, ... tells t... cient ... defic... D... san ... Yo... ca... c...

Jersey's Education Board Adopts Guidelines for Pupil Performance

By ALFONSO A. NARVAEZ

Special to The New York Times

TRENTON, Jan. 9 — The State Board of Education today approved five controversial measures setting forth minimum standards for graduation from high school, requiring that each public ... graduation based upon ... tests on basic... said that students successfully complete ... minimum high school curriculum. ... such a curriculum would mandate ... four years of reading and writing ... three years of high school, two years of ... composition, two years of social studies ... and history, one year of natural or physical science, one year of art, ... of current events, development ... of physical education in ... school. The class of ... is giving adequate ... to require this ... year of their education ... must pass minimum ... ing in the ninth grade ... school boards provide the ... al instruction. The ... in the 1980-81 school year. ... was ordered in a law ...

City U. to Require That Students Pass Collegiate Exam in Three R's

Continued From Page A1

... proficiency standards were not intended to cut the size of the senior ... colleges or otherwise to exclude any ... students from studying in the City University.

"To the contrary, the whole purpose ... is to assure that students will be able to move on through the upper division without being crippled by the lack of basic skills," Mr. Brenner said. "If students ... don't ... better prepared, then they won't drop out."

Minimum proficiency standards, however, are already a matter of controversy within the university. Earlier this year ... Brooklyn College had to back off from a new writing examination for sophomores after Hispanic and other minority ... students charged that it constituted ... unfair ... to force them out of the ...

The new tests of basic competence ... have their origin in the Board of Higher Education's decision—after its first ... last April—to define standards for ... students moving from the lower to ... upper division in the university.

Committee Plan Accepted

The board called upon Robert J. Kibbee, the chancellor, to establish standards for "basic learning skills necessary to cope successfully with advanced work in academic disciplines." A faculty-dominated committee headed by Prof. Ruth Milberg of Lehman College was established to ... the implementation of this policy. ... the university has gone along with ... committee's proposals.

... tests, which Mr. Brenner said will ... next September, vary considerably ... discipline to discipline. ... reading standard, for example, in ... effect constitutes an admissions ... for regular academic courses. ... said that students would be ... pass to move out of remedial ... The mathematics requirement ... other hand, calls on students to ... pass them to move out of remedial ... matics course beyond algebra. ... exam in this course, Mr. Brenner ... will probably constitute the ... test.

The writing requirement is ... more complicated. Students will ... proficiency examination after ... a full year of regular freshman ... tion. It will consist of a writing ... beyond any tests or papers ... the course.

EDUCATION

N.Y.U. Demanding Proficiency In Writing

By EDWARD B. FISKE

FOR half an hour one recent morning, Scott Lackey and his 12 freshman writing students at New York University struggled silently with the task of writing short essays about "post-holiday depression."

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Urban Education

City Colleges' Troubl... Tasks Keep Mounting Funds Don't Keep Up

One Prime Job Is to Remed... Public Schools' Failure... Part-Timers' Ratio Rise...

Demands by Neighborhood...

By FREDERICK C. KLEIN

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

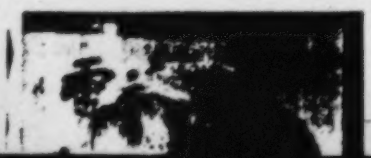
CHICAGO—The architectural style of th... University of Illinois's 15-year-old Chicag... campus is starkly modern, all sharp angles ... and exposed concrete. Students say tha... when the winter winds blow, it's the coldest ... spot in town.

Inside the classroom and office buildings, ... the atmosphere is one of clutter, crowds and ... haste. "This place isn't much for charm, is ... it?" says Marcia Chaimovitz, a sophomore, ... as she waits for an always-scarce elevator ... in the university's high-rise Student Union. ... She adds:

"We get a generic brand of education ... here—good quality but not much personal...

City U. Earning Reputation in Remedial Writing Field

THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, APRIL 4, 1977



reflected how a student either heard or pronounced the word, and strange uses of a plural form or "ed" could be understood as the translation of Spanish forms into English usage.

Dean Shaughnessy noted that in one placement exam a student seemed to use

Community College, deals with such problems through a large repertoire of techniques, including simple storytelling. At one recent class, for example, Maxine Hawkins, a remedial student, held the class's attention for more than 10 minutes with a description of her morning

APPENDIX B

TABLE 1

REMEDIAL COURSE ENROLLMENT* IN FIRST SEMESTER
FALL 1979 FULL-TIME FRESHMEN

	Senior Colleges		Community Colleges	
	Regular	SEEK	Regular	College Discovery
Total Number of first-time full-time freshmen:	9,876	3,285	17,553	1,973
Percent enrolled in remedial courses:				
0 courses	44%	3%	23%	7%
1 course	26%	10%	25%	17%
2 courses	16%	17%	29%	35%
3 + courses	14%	69%	23%	40%
Percent enrolled in at least one remedial course:	56%	97%	77%	93%

*Remedial courses include all compensatory, developmental, and noncredit remedial courses.

Source: Freshmen Profile 1979, OIRA

TABLE 2

REMEDIAL COURSE* ENROLLMENT IN FIRST SEMESTER - FALL 1979 FULL-TIME FRESHMEN
BY HIGH SCHOOL AVERAGE

	Senior Colleges				Community Colleges			
	Regular		SEEK		Regular		College Discovery	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
High School Average = 80.0 and above =	6,201	63%	105	3%	1,775	10%	46	2%
Number of Remedial Courses:								
0 courses		49%		5%		30%		11%
1 course		26%		19%		25%		26%
2 courses		13%		17%		23%		33%
3 + courses		12%		59%		21%		30%
		100%		100%		100%		100%
High School Average = 75.0 - 79.9 =	1,600	16%	953	29%	2,809	16%	427	22%
Number Of Remedial Courses:								
0 courses		34%		5%		24%		8%
1 course		28%		12%		29%		20%
2 courses		22%		19%		27%		35%
3 + courses		19%		64%		20%		37%
		100%		100%		100%		100%
High School Average = 70.0 - 74.9 =	1,023	10%	1,195	36%	5,727	33%	743	38%
Number of Remedial Courses:								
0 courses		34%		2%		19%		7%
1 course		26%		10%		26%		16%
2 courses		24%		18%		33%		37%
3 + courses		16%		70%		23%		41%
		100%		100%		100%		100%
High School Average = less than 70.0 =	314	3%	827	25%	2,942	17%	606	31%
Number of Remedial Courses:								
0 courses		26%		3%		15%		7%
1 course		26%		7%		24%		16%
2 courses		26%		16%		33%		31%
3 + courses		22%		74%		28%		45%
		100%		100%		100%		100%
High School Average = missing or not applicable =	737	7%	204	6%	4,300	24%	151	8%
Number of Remedial Courses:								
0 courses		57%		6%		31%		4%
1 course		23%		7%		22%		19%
2 courses		12%		13%		24%		46%
3 + courses		8%		74%		22%		31%
		100%		100%		100%		100%

*Remedial courses include all compensatory, developmental, and noncredit remedial courses

TABLE 3

PERCENT REMEDIAL HOURS* OF TOTAL CREDIT LOAD** FULL-TIME STUDENTS

FALL 1979 SEMESTER

	Senior College		Community Colleges	
	Regular	SEEK	Regular	Discovery College
% Remedial Hours of Total Credit Load - Fall 1979 first-time freshmen in Fall 1979 semester:	17%	46%	39%	51%
% Remedial Hours of Total Credit Load - all lower division students (i.e. freshmen and sophomores) in Fall 1979 semester:	8%	30%	22%	31%
% Remedial Hours of Total Credit Load - all undergraduate students in Fall 1979 semester:	8%		23%	

*Remedial Hours include all hours in excess of degree credit in compensatory and developmental courses and all contact hours in noncredit remedial courses.

**Total Credit Load includes all degree credits plus all remedial hours (i.e. equated credits). Minimum credit load for full-time status is 12 per semester.